DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 089 180 CG 008 782

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TITLE A Training Program for College Residence Hall Advisors: Rincon Hall, California State University, Northridge.
PUB DATE [73]
NOTE 36p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$1.85 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS College Programs; *College Students; *Dormitories; *Guidance Counseling; Program Descriptions; *Resident Assistants; Sensitivity Training; Student Needs; *Student Personnel Workers; Student Problems

ABSTRACT

This program was devised in an attempt to train more effective resident advisors for the 1972-73 school year at a dormitory at California State University. The special characteristics of the dormitory--racially mixed and discordant--seemed to indicate a need for a special kind of resident advisor training program, one that attempted to better acquaint resident advisors with their own feelings and those of other resident advisors and the incoming students. It sought to unite the resident advisors into a single group, working together and setting the mood for the entire dormitory. Virtually all schools have such training programs, although not much literature has been published on the topic, nor has much research been done in the area. It was felt that the most effective program would, like most others, feature an inservice week on campus including a three-day retreat, and use of a handbook, reading list, self-evaluation forms, and weekly meetings. Unlike other programs, the inservice week at CSU included extensive sessions in sensitivity training. It was anticipated that the inservice portion of the program and the required readings would assist students as well as advise in coping with aspects of racial prejudice. (Author)

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A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR COLLEGE RESIDENCE HALL ADVISORS:

RINCON HALL, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Ruth Matthias, M.A.

CG 008 782

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I. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In the spring of 1972, Rincon Hall was serving approximately only one-half of its capacity for students. This is no earth-shattering statement, considering that this is a problem which many dormitories across the country have encountered. The empty beds are not the main concern, however, since they are only a symptom of some deeper underlying causes of dissatisfaction among students in campus housing. Riker (1965) is referring to the lack of academic stimulation in the following quote, but more general deductions could be made from it:

> ...the bright recreation room says to students, "You're here to play." The expensive lounge says, "You're here to relax." The long corridors and congested lobbies or dining rooms say, "You're not really important here." The disciplinary system and staff procedures state flatly, "You're juvenile." (p. 2)

It is not too difficult to understand how conditions in residence halls can alienate the same student who has the potential to positively influence the climate. Despite the fact that students have different needs, there exists a definite lack of individual choice, due to dormitory regulations, and the inflexibility of the physical environment (van der Ryn and Silverstein, 1967). Shay (1969) also discusses these concerns, in addition to stressing the need for, but definite lack of freedom and privacy in the dormitories.

One immense problem of a more concrete nature is the increase of vandalism in dormitories. The outcome of this is not wholly

negative, since it has served to bring renewed attention to the residential program phase of student personnel (Seigel, 1968).

Rincon shares most of these generally-stated problems. For instance, the physical environment is new, but uninspiring, due to a lack of funds to finish construction. Cement walls remain the same drab grey color.

However, Rincon Hall is also very unique becuase it is beset by seemingly insurmountable handicaps. Because the students in the dormitory are a mixture of black, white, Chicano, and Oriental, the striving for a community feeling is deeply hindered by racial conflicts and tensions. In addition, the whites are mostly middle class and the blacks, lower class.

Tensions were made manifest in various ways. Many students moved out of the dormitory, many complaints were registered, vandalism increased (I was very aware of the skeletal remnants of two bicycles chained to the otherwise empty bike rack during one of my trips to the dormitory), fire alarms were set, confrontations between people continued, etc.

The main problem seems to be "How can the multi-racial living situation be transformed from an experience of striking out or withdrawing to one of sharing and relating?"

One feasible solution to this problem appears to lie in the resident advisors, who seem to set the climate for the whole dormitory. How can residents be expected to relate harmoniously

when there is strife among the resident advisors? It is therefore hypothesized that a training program which helps to foster some sense of community with the resident advisors will indirectly influence the dormitory environment.

Several other factors need to be considered before continuing. First, no specific resident advisor training program exists, to say nothing of a program specially tailored to meet the unique needs of Rincon Hall students. Also, there appears to be a need for trained staff supervision. In addition, dormitory staff are all new in their positions.

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The reasons for using students in the dormitories as resident advisors are many. Unfortunately, a major administrative reason stems from pure economics. It is fairly inexpensive to utilize readily available manpower in exchange for room and board. Also, because the number of professional staff is limited, but not usually sufficient to handle all student needs, student members are an indispensable adjunct of the housing staff.

The use of undergraduate resident advisors usually is beneficial, since they offer a type of structured friendship which has been perceived as helpful by students (Lynch, 1970). For many freshman, the contact is their first and most effective, and the youthfulness of the resident advisor is usually accompanied by enthusiasm, a fresh approach, willingness to learn, receptiveness to new ideas, involvement, and a close familiarity with the feelings a new student has (Greenleaf, 1967).

There are also certain disadvantages in using students this way. They are a transient staff, which is difficult for the students, the administration, and the hall program. They are young and immature; yet they will be relied upon to do important counseling, and also, higher stipends are necessary in order to insure sufficient numbers of competent applicants. (National Association of Womens' Deans and Counselors Handbook, 1957).[1] (At CSUN, about twice as

many applicants applied and went through screening, including an interview with a committee of six, as were hired. This would appear to be an adequate number if any amount of self-screening took place.)

It is obvious then, that a good training program for these students is a vital necessity. Practically all schools have programs of some sort. Whether or not these programs are effective, in terms of results, is another question.

Summaries of two surveys include information about training programs. Grown and Zunker (1966) in a 20% random sample survey, found certain differences between larger (over 2000 students) and smaller schools. One-half of the larger shcools spent more than 10 hours in training, compared with 18% of the smaller schools. Training was done by personnel deans and residence hall directors, although the larger schools made more use of dormitory directors and professional personnel. Types of instruction utilized most were group discussion, with lectures following closely. (See Appendix A). It is interesting that few of the newer techniques are being used (role-playing, practice exercises), while the traditional techniques are emphasized. (This may be just a reflection of educational trends, or non-trends, to use a more descriptive term. Inflexibility in education does not seem to be atypical.)

It is interesting to note that Brown and Zunker feel that many institutions are still using haphazard training procedures, accompanied by a lack of communication among institutions using resident advisors. I too had the impression that most programs were very

introspective, although I did receive some interest regarding an exchange of ideas. Brown and Zunker (1966, p. 46) concluded by stating that "further improvement in using the cheap and expandable guidance resource available to our colleges" is necessary. This seems obvious.

Dixon (1970) in her survey, found that most programs are handled by the dean of students' office, most of them prefer in-service training and one- to two-day orientations before fall, and few required formal academic course work. The time spent in training averaged 16 to 35 hours.

Ricker (1965) and Greenleaf (1967) each provide general descriptions of resident advisor training programs. Riker discusses in-service education which should have a two-fold purpose: "to develop understanding and skills in human relationships, and to provide for the two-way communication of information for and about students" (p. 27). The trend of having pre-fall orientation meetings from one to three days, and regularly scheduled staff meetings has certain deficiencies:

> Regrettably, the quality and consistency of these efforts presently leave much to be desired. Fall orientation programs are often inspiring, but little follow-up of ideas or plans actually occurs during the ensuing year. So called training meetings during the term often amount to little more than administrative announcements with some discussion of the latest crisis, whatever it may be. The untrained staff remains untrained, learning through trial and error to the frequent disadvantage of those they are supposed to lead. (p. 27)

This situation could be remedied by deciding in advance to

utilize the major portions of the meetings for instructional purposes, such as discussion of problems which the resident advisors are encountering. Administrative information can be distributed efficiently by using news bulletins or staff memoranda.

Also, Riker mentions the possibility of a required credit course in human relations as a supplement to in-service education, which could be relevant to work in housing as well as other fields of study. Such a course, if not already offered, could be developed in cooperation with the appropriate department. (A similar type of course will be discussed on page 8).

Greenleaf (1967) discusses many phases of resident advisor training, including spring training, a pre-school workshop, weekly staff meetings, use of resource personnel, individual supervision, and techniques of in-service education.

In discussing the pre-school workshop, she lists the following objectives:

> 1. To introduce or familiarize resident assistants to the student personnel and residence hall staff and to acquaint them with the expectation of the college community.
> 2. To familiarize each resident assistant with the specific responsibilities of his job.
> 3. To provide an opportunity to meet those people on campus with whom they will have a close working relationship and to whom they may refer students.
> 4. To become better acquainted with fellow staff members and those to whom they are directly responsible. These associations are important to the development of real "team work".
> 5. To allow resident assistants to become settled in their rooms and ready to "greet" and help new students.
> 6. To "be ready" to open the halls effectively and efficiently. (p. 42.)

The importance of this workshop as a basis for continuing development throughout the year is stressed.

In addition, Greenleaf suggests the following techniques for in-service education (pp. 44-45): (1) staff manuals, divided into the major divisions of Advisory, Procedural, Program Areas, and Ethics and Expectations; (2) other college printed materials, such as a packet of handbooks; (3) case studies, to show techniques of group and individual guidance, and relationship of staff to staff, staff to student, and student to student; (4) problem solving, in which resident advisors could respond according to what they would do with problems in the areas of confidentiality, counseling, group morale, and identity; (5) role playing, which would tend to follow from problem solving; (6) audio-visual materials; and (7) recent literature.

Descriptions of specific programs vary from those using required courses to those using T-groups. Michigan State University offers a three credit course in cooperation with the College of Education. (Sandeen, 1967). The 350 resident advisors felt that it did contribute to their overall effectiveness. The course was taught as a supplement to training sessions, which usually included information meetings with some college personnel. The following are listed as course objectives:

1. To review approaches to and objectives of higher education, with emphasis on understanding its relevance to resident advisors.
2. To review educational and social/psychological characteristics of college students.

3. To study and discuss various roles in relationship to student growth.
4. To become conversant with some current issues in student personnel work in higher education.

Ohio State University offers a similar course (Greenleaf, 1967, p. 41).

In contrast to this program, Lycoming College (Pennsylvania) uses sociodrama in an intensive two-day training session in order to produce a level of skill in counseling. (Nair and Sonders, 1969). Staff members suggest specific situations in training, and others arise naturally later.

On the first day, besides meetings with campus people, presentation of the theoretical foundations of sociodrama with role-playing situations help emphasize the special value of the students acting as an advisor for fellow students. Factors stressed by instruction are: tensions are most likely to arise in the living unit; one learns best from peers; problems are most easily shared by fellow students; and the many roles played by the individual reveal his personality. The resident advisor is in a position to see more of these roles than any other staff member.

In an interesting experiment at Ohio University, 151 undergraduate resident advisors were divided into three groups (Rand and Carew, 1970). The first two groups were enrolled in a three quarter hour course called Seminar in Student Relations Programs. The first group was taught using encounter techniques, to aid in self-awareness, impact on others, sensitivity to self- and other- feelings, understanding group and individual dynamics, and experimenting with more

effective and helpful ways of behaving in relation to others. The second group was approached in a didactic way, using lectures and group discussions to teach basic fundamentals. The instructor assumed major responsibility. The third group, a control group, received no training.

It was indicated that resident advisors in the T-groups performed significantly better, and were pleased with the class. Such training would be good if the goals are for resident advisors to work effectively and helpfully. However, if the only goal is to provide information, then the didactic approach is more effective. This study does not seem to recommend that didactic training is out, but rather that T-group experiences should be considered as part of the training program.

Generally speaking, program content varies little from campus to campus, while the organization does vary. At CSUN, the head resident of Rincon Hall is in charge of training the resident advisors, and she would normally do this by herself. At UCLA, one assistant dean is in charge of each dormitory and the 12 house advisors in each hall, including their orientation. So, except for some coordination done by the housing dean, in which some basics of the resident advisor training program are set up (regarding situations such as emergencies, etc.), there are, essentially, four different training programs, one for each dormitory.

At USC, all resident advisors take part in four days of scheduled activities consisting mostly of meeting people on campus,

listening to speakers, and some fun activities.

III. OBJECTIVES

Various resources make available a list of objectives for dormitories. Standing (1969) discusses the inability of dormitories to satisfy social and intellectual needs of students, and lists the following as necessary standards:

> 1. to improve the emphasis on existing strengths in terms of promoting and improving programs found to satisfy needs of students.
> 2. to provide relatively unstructured diversity of opportunities for varied experiences as part of the hall programs.
> 3. to legitimize intellectual behaviorial tendencies of students as an alternative model to the often insulating and non- or anti-intellectual influence of peer groups.
> 4. to make explicit to residents, especially frosh, the subtle norms that do seem to influence their behavior. (p. 20)

The objectives listed by Cuninggim (1958) are an attempt to make the program personal for each student by showing concern, and to be aware of problems between students and staff. These objectives are to help each resident:

> 1. to visualize residence hall living as an important part of her educational experience.
> 2. to accept the opportunities and responsibilities for the development of highest potentials commensurate with her needs and resources.
> 3. to contribute to group living. (p. 69.)

Greenleaf (1967), not to be outdone, lists the following objectives:

> 1. to assist in providing an environment which will be conducive to academia.
> 2. to assist in the orientation to college life and in the self-development of each student...that each understands and evaluates his own purpose for being in college.
> 3. to interpret university objectives, policies, rules, regulations, and administration to students and to interpret student attitudes, opinions, and actions to the administration.

4. to help develop in each student a sense of individual responsibility and self-discipline in learning control of their individual lives and actions.
5. to provide the opportunities for faculty and student contacts outside the classroom environment so that learning experiences are enhanced.
6. to provide for basic concerns of the individual students within the ever-changing campus community.
7. to provide, through student organizations, an opportunity to practice democratic living and an opportunity for students to learn to work with others and to provide integrated activities to broaden the use of leisure time experiences.
8. to provide an atmosphere of warmth, high morale, and loyalty towards the unit, hall, and college. (p. 10.)

All of these lists include the importance of individual growth and self-awareness, intellectual growth, and the liaison opportunity between staff and students, but only Cunniggim makes even a vague reference to community living (#3). It is unfortunate that this aspect of dormitory life is not emphasized and utilized more than it is.

Before discussing the objectives for Rincon Hall at CSUN, it would appear to be in order to present some statistics about Rincon Hall. Of the 501 students there, over 90% are freshmen, 244 are male and 247 female, and 41% are black, 43% white, 14% Chicano, and 2% Oriental.[2] The resident assistants in the dormitory for fall, 1972 will be 5 male, 6 female, 6 black, 4 white, and one Oriental. All are full-time students.

Presently, the very situation that should ideally increase and contribute to effective inter-racial interactions, is a source of conflict. It is ironic that Castillo (1968, p. 205) suggests cooperative dormitories as a method for preventing isolation from

[2]Statistics are from fall enrollment, 1971.

cultures.

Before any of the objectives mentioned previously can be met in this dormitory, certain unique characteristics and conflicts must be dealt with. For this reason, only one objective will be mentioned. Dormitory residents should experience a sense of community and closeness, so that other previously mentioned objectives can be reached. It is felt that this objective can be accomplished in part if the resident advisors develop a similar sense of community among themselves. Therefore the training program which was set up should work to foster such community spirit, by encouraging both introspection and other-awareness.

IV. THE PROGRAM

The following program is based on the rather small amount of available research as well as the unique needs seen in the dormitory. It is hoped that the content and procedures which are presented will, when implemented, help encourage better relations and greater cooperation among the resident advisors, which in turn will influence a more positive climate in the entire dormitory.

Approximately 20 hours have already been spent in spring training. The purpose of this was to make resident advisors familiar with what is available for students on campus. They met with representatives from the Economic Opportunities Program, financial aid, student health, student activities, etc., as well as the college deans and president.

Schedule for In-service Program

Sunday, September 3

3:00 Move in

6:00 Dinner-pizza and beer

8:00 *Introductions--getting to know each other. Using two circles, discuss such topics as what I like about me, a vivid childhood memory, etc.

Monday, September 4

8:00 Breakfast

9:00 The Resident Advisor Job, and its Expectations
*Role Playing (Mike Klassman)

12:00 Lunch

2:00 Problem--What should be the goals of Rincon Hall?
Community spirit?
*Break into task groups to discuss

3:00 Report from task groups
Whole group discussion

6:00 Dinner

8:00 Policies and procedures-- The resident advisor's role in establishing and enforcing certain policies. Are rules necessary?
(Could use different task groups here also.)

Tuesday, September 5

8:00 Breakfast

9:30 Leave for retreat

12:00 Lunch
*Feeding others fruit

1:30 Swim and relaxation

*Starred items will be discussed on pp. 19-22.

4:30 *Rap session. Discuss "How I'd like to come across to other people and how that affects my behavior" (three small groups)

6:00 Dinner-- B-B-Q

8:00 What is counseling? Guest speaker(s) from the counseling center.
Discussion

10:00 Games with the whole group
*Alienation. Discuss feelings
*Trust fall

Wednesday, September 6

8:00 Breakfast

9:00 Race relations
*Power trip game with stars

10:00 Task groups

11:30 Task group reports

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Discuss discipline

2:00 Free time. Horseback riding or other activities

6:00 Dinner. Guests from Black and Chicano EOP's
Guest speaker (Stan Charnofsky?)
Informal discussions with guests

Thursday, September 7

8:00 Breakfast

10:00 Meeting the housing crew--dean and managers

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Discuss the first Wing meeting and dorm activities

2:30 Swim and relaxation

6:00 Dinner

7:00 *Wrap-up session: "Something new and good about me, and some things I like about others in the group"
Feedback on the retreat

8:00 Clean up and pack

9:00 Leave for Rincon

Friday, September 9

8:30 Breakfast

10:00 Meet maintenance

11:00 Meet campus police officers and LAPD

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Packets and signs

3:00 Summary and preparation for move-in day

6:00 Dinner and party

Saturday, September 9

9:00 Breakfast

10:30 Resident advisor planning of activities for residents' orientation week
Task groups

12:00 Reports from task groups

1:00 Lunch

1:30 FREE

Discussion of the Schedule

Many of the activities on the schedule, especially those at the retreat, are included for the purpose of meeting the objectives previously stated. In addition to the activities, one or two staff members from the counseling center will be present at the retreat for two purposes: (1) to help the resident advisors to fully explore their own feelings and their relations with others and (2) to build rapport between the counseling center and the dormitory staff.

The following is a list of some of the different methods used in the program, the technique, and/or the reason for using that method.

Introductions--A fast way of getting acquainted is to have two circles, an inner and an outer circle, facing each other. The leader will assign a topic and each couple will converse about that topic. After several minutes, the inner circle will rotate, so that everyone will have a new partner, and a new topic will be assigned. The inner circle will continue to rotate until the people are back to their original partners. Some topics which could be insightful are, "What I like best about myself", "a happy childhood memory", "something that is bothering me", "something in myself that I'd like to change", "when I feel best", "when I feel rotten", etc.

Besides being a forced get-acquainted measure, this technique also has a co-counseling flavor, and perhaps the techniques of listening and hearing can be explored.

Role playing--This can serve many functions. The main purpose of the original session on Monday is to acquaint the resident advisors with the techniques and uses of role playing, as well as to get into the various aspects of being a resident advisor. This could easily be used on a more impromptu basis later on in the week, and it could also be used as a problem-solving technique during the weekly meetings, during which many problems arise and solutions are discussed.

Task groups--This is no new method, but it can help the resident advisors to get to know each other better than they would if they were to remain in a large group.

Feeding fruit--This may seem a little ludicrous to some of the resident advisors, but it seems to be a way to force instant intimacy, and it can be fun. It may be a good idea to try to get into feelings about this afterwards. Find out if anyone who thought it was insane before they did it experienced any changes in their feelings while they were doing it, or if many felt it was completely worthless, etc.

Rap session--This may be more effective in two or three small groups. Again, it can have a dual purpose. It can help resident advisors explore their own feelings and those of others and to help them learn to listen. Also, they will be more able to understand and thus relate to the others more easily.

Alienation game--To get in touch with feelings of being left out and excluding someone from a group, the resident advisors will join

in a circle, holding hands to prevent one other resident advisor from breaking into the middle of the circle. The person breaks in only when the circle decides to allow him in. The "out" person should probably, the first time especially, be somecne who doesn't feel too alienated originally. The purpose is not to reinforce negative feelings, but to better understand what it is like to be excluded, and eventually, included.

Trust fall--This is a good game to follow the alienation game, because it tends to foster group spirit, and a sense of caring about the person in the center. That person has his eyes closed, with feet in one position the whole time. He is then continually pushed over and then caught, and the group's responsibility is to keep him from falling to the ground and getting hurt. The person in the center will experience a rocking motion, accompanied or not accompanied by a trust that the group will stop his falls.

Power trip--By choosing colored stars, and then being given a type of hierarchical order of the colors, the resident advisors can experiment with feelings of power or lack of it. The "top" color has power over everyone, and can demand anything he wants from anyone else. The "second" color has authority over everyone but number one, and so on down the line.

After a period of time, a new hierarchy can be presented, so that people can experience both power and non-power.

(Such a game was used by Chicanos in the Los Angeles Human

Relations Council, so it would seem to be a good technique for inter-racial relations.)

Wrap-up session--Borrowed from re-evaluation or co-counseling, this technique is one way of expressing the positive side of feelings. This positive approach will probably be used during the year as well.

Handbook

The UCLA handbook for dormitory advisors consists of all the policies and procedures which are necessary to know. The model manual outlined by Kidd (1956) is much less pragmatic, including the goals of the residence hall, rewards and objectives for resident advisors, principles of human relations, and the guidance and administrative functions of resident advisors.

Hopefully, the required readings and training program will include most of the aspects of human relations, counseling, objectives, etc., so for this reason, various parts of the existing manual were deleted, but will still be made available to the resident advisors. The revised manual will consist of the following sections:

Roles and Responsibilities of the Resident Advisor

Policies and Procedures

Student Government and Activities

Discipline

Available Services for Students

Appendix (contracts, forms, etc.)

The major portions deleted dealt with counseling and study skills.

Student advisors should skim through the manual, and then use it as a reference when necessary. They should feel free to suggest any changes.

Reading List--The following readings are not meant to be all inclusive. It is hoped that the resident advisors after several months, will be able to analyze the readings in terms of their value, and exclude some, and add some, as they perceive them to be useful.

Copies of the required readings will be made available to each resident advisor, and the suggested readings will be included in the resident advisor office/lounge library.

READING LIST

Required readings:

1. S. Charnofsky: "Counseling for Power"
   from the Personnel and Guidance Journal, January, 1971,
   pages 351-357.

2. Nickerson and Harrington: "Being vs. Learning"
   from The College Student as Counselor
   pages 11-27.

3. Rowell et.al.: "Pressures and Conflicts in the Personnel
   Assistant Job"
   from The Personnel Assistant in College Residence Halls
   pages 48-63.

4. Nevitt Sanford: "The Integration of Sexuality in the Personality"
   from Where Colleges Fail
   pages 132-144.

5. Kenneth Keniston: "Prologue: Youth as a Way of Life" (pages
   3-21) and "Drug Users: Heads and Seekers" (pages 230-252)
   from Youth and Dissent

6. Carl Rogers: "The Characteristics of a Helping Relationship"
   from Counseling and Guidance: A Summary View, J. Adams, ed.
   pages 141-152

7. Murray Friedman: "Is White Racism the Problem?"
   from Up Against the Urban Wall, Venetoulis and Eisenhauer,
   ed. pages 365-373.

8. Leonel Castillo: "Inter-Minority Relations"
   from The Mexican-American
   pages 203-208.

9. Celia Heller: "Mexican-American Youth: Forgotten Youth at the
   Crossroads" from America's Other Youth, Gottlieb and
   Heinsohn, ed.
   pages 55-69.

Suggested readings:

1. All of the books mentioned above

2. Carl Rogers: On Becoming A Person

3. Fritz Perls: Gestalt Therapy Verbatim

4. Eric Berne: Games People Play

5. Claude Brown: Manchild in the Promised Land

6. Malcolm X: The Autobiography of Malcolm X

Self-evaluation

This form, adapted from Greenleaf (1967, p. 47) is to be used by resident advisors to evaluate themselves periodically. Areas can be identified in which progress is lacking or improving. Mid-way through the semester, each resident advisor will meet with the head resident to compare self-evaluations with the head resident's evaluation.

(The form is found on pages 27 and 28.)

Weekly meetings

The weekly meetings should be more than a place where new administrative policies and decisions are given out. They should include relevant movies, occasional speakers, and also quite a bit of problem solving, as they arise in the dormitory. Mainly, they should be a time for group sharing.

A SELF-EVALUATION FOR
RESIDENT ASSISTANTS

Instructions:

Evaluate yourself on a 5 point scale for each item. A 5 means you are carrying out this responsibility as well as could be expected from anyone; a 1 means you are falling far short of expectations; a 3 means you are doing as well as the average person.

A. A Student Assistant's Responsibility for Individual Students.

1. I know the men and women in my unit by name, and something personal about each. _____
2. I can easily converse with each person in my unit. _____
3. Students easily approach me with questions. _____
4. I have been able to refer those students who appear to need special guidance. _____
5. I am able to have "academic conversations" with students concerning current events, ideas, decisions to be made, etc. _____
6. I am available at closing hours on most nights and around meal hours for students to find. _____

B. A Student Assistant's Responsibility for Environment.

7. I am in the living unit enough during the evening hours that I know students can study there. _____
8. I know materials in the center library well enough to make suggestions for effective student use. _____
9. I participate in center and campus cultural programs and have success in challenging students to do likewise. _____
10. I have at least once during the semester effectively involved students and faculty in informal contacts. _____
11. I am able to hold students responsible for rules and regulations which exist as environmental controls. _____
12. I understand our University's philosophy of discipline and understand my role as a student assistant in dealing with discipline. _____

C. A Student Assistant's Responsibility for Advising Student Groups

13. I know well the officers and members of the group I advise. _____
14. I work with the chairman ahead of time to the end that the meeting has a goal or purpose which is met. _____

15. I know and my officers realize the goals and objectives of the group. _____
16. I am able to make suggestions for worthwhile activities and am well informed on programs. _____

D. A Student Assistant's Administrative Responsibilities.

17. I am able to interpret University rules and regulations. _____
18. I am able to interpret Residence Hall rules and regulations. _____
19. I am kept informed on administrative decisions which I am able to interpret to students. _____

E. A Student Assistant's Personal Appraisal.

20. I set an example by my academic work. _____
21. I adhere to rules and regulations. _____
22. I show a friendliness to all students and staff. _____
23. I can frequently see the cheerful, bright and hopeful side of my job. _____
24. I enjoy my work. _____
25. I have and maintain a sense of humor. _____
26. I have taken every opportunity to learn and to know my job. _____
27. I am able to accept the commitment to this job without hesitation. _____
28. I follow through on tasks I have to do. _____
29. I am aware of my personal limitations, strengths, and weaknesses. _____
30. I receive suggestions and criticism without defensive feelings. _____
31. My superiors, co-workers and students enjoy working with me. _____
32. I seldom cause friction and tension with a group. _____
33. I am anxious to use new ideas that I have heard about and observed. _____
34. I can meet any social situation with confidence and assist students in doing likewise. _____
35. I am tactful in my dealings with others. _____
36. I refrain from gossip, sarcasm, depreciation, or suspicion of others. _____
37. I make every effort to understand the entire situation before making a judgment. _____
38. I can make sound decisions. _____
39. I observe strictly a policy of refraining from discussing students where there is any chance of other students hearing or sensing the conversation. _____

TOTAL _____

V. EVALUATION

This program can be evaluated in two ways. First, the resident advisors themselves can evaluate the program in terms of how helpful they felt it was in meeting their needs, and helping them to be more effective as advisors.

Secondly, it can be evaluated in terms of whether or not the objectives have been met. This is a more indirect evaluation, but could be accomplished fairly easily. Comparisons between 1971-72 and 1972-73 could be made from statistics in each of the following areas:

1. number of complaints by resident advisors.
2. number of complaints by students.
3. number of complaints by the administration.
4. number of students leaving the dormitory (last year was highest in history).
5. number of staff resigning from their positions (about one-half quit between semesters last year).
6. number of confrontations in the dormitory.
7. amount of vandalism.
8. number of false fire alarms set off.

Other factors, such as race relations, amount of noise, use of drugs, interest in social activities, etc. are more difficult to measure, but could perhaps be estimated as better, same, or worse by people living in the dormitory both years.

VI. SUMMARY

This program was devised in an attempt to train more effective resident advisors for the 1972-73 school year at Rincon Hall, CSUN. The special characteristics of the dormitory--racially mixed and discordant--seem to indicate a need for a special kind of resident advisor training program, one that attempts to better acquaint resident advisors with their own feelings and those of other resident advisors and the incoming students. It also attempts to unite the resident advisors as a whole into one group, working together, and setting the mood for the entire dormitory.

Practically all schools have such training programs, although not a great deal of literature has been published on the topic, nor has much research been done in the area.

It was felt that the most effective program would, like most others, include an in-service week on campus, including a three-day retreat, and also use of a handbook, reading list, self-evaluation forms, and weekly meetings. Unlike other programs, the week long session includes quite a bit of sensitivity training. Hopefully, the in-service week and the required readings should also assist students in coping with aspects of racial prejudice.

The program is not intended to be a final solution, or a semi-permanent installment, but rather should be used as a device which can be evaluated and continually changed, in order to fulfill the objectives of helping people relate to people within a dormitory setting.

APPENDIX A

Instructional Procedures Utilized in Training Student Counselors

Training Procedure	Enrollment Under 2000 Number	Per Cent	Enrollment Over 2000 Number	Per Cent
Reading Assignments	13	16.9	11	26.8
Lectures	32	41.6	31	75.6
Demonstrations	12	15.6	17	41.5
Group Discussions	59	76.6	34	82.9
Practice Exercises	7	9.1	8	19.5
Buddy System Training	7	9.1	2	4.9
Role Playing	11	14.3	5	12.2

[1]Percentage is based on 77 responding institutions.
[2]Percentage is based on 41 responding institutions.

Taken from W.F. Brown and V.G. Zunker, "Student Counselor Obligation at Four-Year Institutions of Higher Learning," Journal of College Student Personnel, 7 (1966), 41-46.

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